

By contrast, the object of the present invention is a system and method for simulating a medical procedure with a simulated organ and a simulated instrument, which include many novel and innovative features. The system and method of the present invention use a mathematical model to model the simulated organ, preferably a spline, such that the force feedback and visual images are determined according to the spline. In addition, detailed description is provided of the procedure for mapping the images to this modeled organ, and for actually displaying the images during the performance of the simulated medical procedure. Furthermore, the simulation of the organ in the present invention optionally does not necessarily resemble a physical organ, since the preferred use of the spline for the mathematical model enables the present invention to

optionally simulate the aggregate presence of the organ. Other useful and innovative features include the simulation of endoscopic cable loops for endoscope procedures. Thus, the present invention is significant both for the inventive use of a mathematical model for simulating the organ and/or interactions of the simulated instrument with the organ, and for the provision of many inventive features for a more "real life" experience with the simulated medical procedure, as well as for the other features recited in the claims.

It should be noted that the following patents were recently brought to the attention of Applicant by a third party, and as such are currently under analysis by Applicant, so that the direct relevance of these patents remains open: US Patent Nos. 5,629,594; 5,459,382; 5,831,408; 6,050,718; 5,880,714; 6,046,727; 6,020,967; 5,825,308; 5,907,487; 6,104,158; 6,067,077; 5,929,846; 6,104,382; 6,128,006; 6,088,017; 5,959,613; 6,024,576; 6,100,874; 5,828,197; 5,805,140; 6,057,828; 5,623,582; 5,739,811; 5,721,566; 5,821,920; 5,929,607; 5,999,168; 6,037,927; 5,767,839; 6,154,198; 6,154,201; 6,020,875; 5,666,138; 5,513,100; 5,889,670; 6,037,927; 5,734,373; 5,889,672; 5,701,140; 5,691,898; 5,754,023; 5,872,438; 5,956,484; 6,125,385; 6,101,530; 6,161,126; 5,844,392; 6,078,308; 6,028,593; 6,020,876; 6,147,674; 6,131,097; 5,769,640.

Respectfully submitted,



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